

A
S E R M O N

Preached at
CLONMELL,

O N

SUNDAY the Sixteenth of September, 1683.

A T T H E

A S S I Z E S

Held for the COUNTY PALATINE of

T I P P E R A R Y.

By J. O. VESEY Master of Arts of *Trinity College* near
Dublin, and Minister of *Abbylease*.

O pray for the Peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee. Psal. 122. 6.

D U B L I N,

Printed by *Joseph Ray*, at *College-Green*, for *Sam. Helsham*
Bokseller, at the *College-Arms*, in *Castle-street*. 1683.

STERN

CLONMELL

BOUND BY THE FIRST OF THE

ASSIZES

IN THE COUNTY PALATINE OF

ST. PATRICK'S

OF THE COUNTY OF ST. PATRICK'S

OF THE COUNTY OF ST. PATRICK'S

OF THE COUNTY OF ST. PATRICK'S

[]

To His GRACE,

MICHAEL,

*By Divine Providence Lord Archbishop of ARDMAGH,
Primate and Metropolitan of all IRELAND,
and Lord High Chancellor of the same, &c.*

May it please your Grace,

YOUR Grace being so eminent a Minister of State in this Kingdom, the main Pillar of the *Irish Church*, under the Government, and so great an Example of Loyalty and Steadiness to the Crown, is the reason why this Paper flies to your Protection, presuming your Grace will encourage the Principles of Loyalty in others; because they are so signal in your self.

It is the joy of all good men to see those, who were found faithful in the times of adversity, plentifully rewarded; to see those Jewels appendant on the Crown, which formerly had shewed their true value by sparkling in the dark; and indeed who so fit to partake of the blessings of Peace, which flow from the Fountain of Royal Bounty, as those who in the late times

of Apostasie and Confusion, durst be Orthodox and Loyal, though it was reputed the worst of Crimes to be so? that which is a just Reward to your Grace, is an Encouragement to others to follow your great Example, and the same Beams that shine on your Grace, warm and enliven the Seeds of Loyalty in others.

Honor is not fit for a Malignant, nor does a Garland become the Brow of a Rebel: It is unreasonable they should expect Favours from His Majesty, who are disaffected to the Government, and with what confidence do they expect to drink of a pure Stream, who cast Dirt and Mud into the Fountain; as if their grinning at the Higher Powers were a sufficient reason for the King to through Preferments into their Mouths.

The worst of your Graces Enemies cannot but acknowledge you to be Orthodox and Loyal: and what can your best Friends, or even the greatest Panegyrick say more? since to be a Christian, and a Subject, to fear God and honour the King, are the two great ends of every mans nativity.

Your Graces experience of the late times will tell you, that a Sermon of this kind preach'd some years agoe, would have made the Preach-

er to be pull'd down, and given occasion to an Insolent Officer to enter the Pulpit with a Back-sword, and hold forth to the People in Buff. But God be thanked we now may preach Peace and Obedience to our Superiours, without danger of Banishment, and may exhort Subjects to Loyalty, and Allegiance to their natural Prince, without fear of Imprisonment or Sequestration.

I do not pretend to any thing extraordinary in this Sermon: but the usefulness of Discourses of Loyalty at this time, made some Persons of Worth and Sence perswade me to publish it. I submit my self to your Graces censure, and however mean the Piece be, I hope your Judgment will be favourable, because of the honesty of its design. We find that the Heathen Votaries offered to their Tutelar Gods, not only Irrational Creatures, as Birds and Beasts, but sometimes even those that were most ridiculous and despicable; and as we cannot imagine any Rational Heathen to be so foolish, as to perswade himself that such Sacrifices were pleasing to the Gods for their intrinsic value (unless he believ'd the Deities to be as stupid and senceless as the Brutes that were offer'd to them) but because they were demonstrations

strations of the inward affections of the mind: so this I hope, though unworthy of so great a Patron, may find acceptance, for this reason only, because it is an argument of a profound acknowledgment of that Service & Duty which is due to your Grace, not only from me, but from all the Sons of the Church of *Ireland*.

I humbly beg your Graces pardon, for detaining you from a better employment of those few Minutes which free you from the weighty Affairs of Church and State. It would be an argument both of want of sense and good manners in me, to trouble your Grace with a tedious Dedication of so inconsiderable a work, which yet humbly hopes to be accepted, because I have no other way of shewing my self to be,

May it please Your Grace,

Your Graces most Obedient,

and most devoted humble Servant,

JO: VESEY.

A Sermon

*A SERMON preached at Clonmell, on Sunday
Septemb. 16. 1683.*

*O pray for the Peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that
love thee. Psal. 122. 6.*

Without troubling you with any manner of Preface, I will fall immediately upon the Words of my Text, in which there are these three things to be taken notice of; First, here is a Duty earnestly enjoyed. Secondly, there is the thing to be prayed for, and that is *the Peace of Jerusalem*. Thirdly, there is an Encouragement to this Duty; *they shall prosper that love thee. O pray for the Peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee.*

1. There is a Duty earnestly enjoyed; *O pray for the Peace of Jerusalem, &c.* That Prayer is a necessary Duty incumbent upon all Christians, the Commands of God in my Text, and in several other places of Scripture, may sufficiently testify: yet because we are generally so disingenuous, as not to think our selves oblig'd by the bare Commands of God, unless we reap some Benefit by obeying such Commands; I will lay down two Reasons, in order to recommend the Necessity of this Duty; and they are,

1. Our own Wants and Necessities.
2. The Goodness and Mercy of God, in that he is willing to answer our Petitions.

1. The first Argument to press this Duty to our Practice, is our own Wants and Necessities. It is one, and not the least, of those Miseries that attend the whole Race of *Adam*,
still

still to want something whilst we are on this side Heaven: The poor man wants Food, the rich man wants Stomach, Health and Digestion: some men would be liberal, but they have not wherewithal, others are full of Wealth, yet have not a Heart to make use of what they possess; some have all things, yet enjoy nothing, for want of being contented with their Condition; the greatest part of Mankind either wants Grace, or is in danger of falling from it; or if some do persevere unto the end, yet they are not in this world what they shall be; they want the blessed Vision of God, which is not to be had till after Death: the best of us transgress every day, and therefore must needs want the Pardon of our Sins for each day. The Wants of the prodigal Son were occasion'd by his own Riot and Excess, and the Disobedience of *Adam* is the cause of all our Wants and Necessities; and although this be a fore Evil, and a heavy Disease; yet he that lay'd on this Curse, and inflicted this Disease, has not left us without Remedy. The Curse is indeed heavy, but the Remedy is light and easie: the Disease is grievous, but the Medicine to cure it is pleasant, easie to be had, and heals infallibly, the poorest man may purchase it. There is not any of *Adam's* Posterity but always stands in need of something or other; the greatest Wants may be supplied by Prayer, and there is no man but may pray, if he please; and the Duty of Prayer is so necessary, that without it, we shall not only want in this world, but we shall be miserably in want to all eternity; without it we cannot have Remission of our Sins, nor the Gift of Gods Grace bestow'd upon us; we cannot expect to be fed by his Mercy, if we think it too much trouble to implore it; we must have a very low esteem of Gods Blessings, if we think them not worth the asking for; and we are very little sensible of our Necessities, if we will not so much as pray to have them remov'd; he is doubly guilty that commits a Fault, and persists in it, and will not so much

much as ask Pardon for it. In short, whilst we are on this side Heaven, we are continually wanting, there is none that can supply our Necessities, but God, and there is no other way for us to be supply'd, but by petitioning the Throne of Grace: and therefore Prayer must needs be a necessary Duty. This is the first Reason, drawn from our own Wants and Necessities.

2. The second Reason to enforce the Duty of Prayer, is the Mercy of God, in that he is willing to hear us. There is nothing in the world so powerful as a man in Prayer, and therefore 'tis call'd the Key of Heaven. What is there so difficult, that Prayer cannot attain to? It gives Victory to the weak, and overthrows the Armies of the mighty: it can make the Sun stand still for the space of a day: it can bring a Drowth upon the Earth for three years & six months, and afterwards cause the Rain to fall plentifully upon the same: if we are Enemies to God, it can reconcile us to his Favour: if we are in a state of Sin and Death, it can renew the Image of God in us, and put us in a state of Grace: it can purchase for us the Blessings of this Life (or, which is far better, the Art of Contentment without them) and the Blessings of the Life to come: by Prayer we are not only in a condition of profiting our selves, but of doing good to our Neighbour: by it every man is a Priest, and every man may be a *Moses*, to atone for the Sins of the people; to prevent the Destruction of a Nation, though it hang over us; and to bring down publick Blessings from on high; the Blessings of Peace and Plenty, the Liberty of our Religion, and the Enjoyment of our Estates: there is nothing so good, but Prayer can purchase for us: there is nothing so hurtful, but Prayer can avert; nay, though the Sword be in Gods Hand, and his Arm stretched forth to strike, and the Judgment be ready to fall upon our heads, yet Prayer is able to appease his Wrath, and withdraw the Arm of the Almighty from

confounding us, and yet all this is not to be imputed to the meer force of Prayer it self; but to the Goodness and Mercy of God, who is so much in love with this Duty, that he can deny us nothing we ask for faithfully, he will certainly give us the very thing it self, or something as good, or better, if the other be not convenient for us.

It has been objected by some, as an Argument against Prayer, That it either supposeth first God to be ignorant of our Prayers; for if not (say they) what need we tell God that which he knows already? Or secondly, that he is not so bountiful to us as he ought, in that he knows our Necessities, and will not help us without so much intreaty. Or thirdly, that he is overcome by our Importunities, and Solicitations, which is an argument of his Weakness, and so would argue an Imperfection in him; this was urg'd by one that was once an Atheist, but afterwards died a great Penitent. But to this the Answer is obvious. For, first, Can there be a greater argument of Gods Goodness to us, than to give us not only the Blessings of this Life, but even Heaven it self for asking? Secondly, We do not pray to inform God of our Necessities (that is too gross a Supposition); but to shew our Faith, and acknowledge his Allsufficiency, and our Dependance upon him. Thirdly, We are not so conceited of our Prayers, as if we thought the meer Force of them, or the Repetition of such and such Words, though they come from a devout Heart, to be able to wrest a Blessing from God, whether he will or no; but that God has ordain'd Prayer as the means and method of making our Addresses to his Divine Majesty. 'Tis true, we are said to wrestle with God, to prevail upon him, to take Heaven by violence, &c. but these are figurative Expressions, and bold Metaphors, which are no arguments of his Weakness, but of his Goodness, in that he has given us so easie a method of addressing our selves, to him; nor is it so much the force of our

Prayers

Prayers themselves, as his infinite Goodness, which moves him to answer our Petitions. Ask and ye shall receive; is a Promise that God will hear our Prayers, and the Mercy of God prompted him to make this Promise; as an encouragement to persuade us to this Duty, our Prayers are offered up since this Promise; and therefore it is not so much their Force that works upon God, as his own Goodness that made him promise; it is not any Power in us, but Compassion in him. A Petition may be very well drawn up; but if the Prince, to whom it is presented, be not of himself inclin'd to do good, he will never answer it merely because it is well penn'd. How many do we see attending with patience from day to day on the Persons of great Men for a Favour, and value not the Sights that are put upon them, so their Requests be at last but granted; but God is more merciful: he is more ready to hear than we to pray, and does not only give us what we pray for; but does encourage us even to pray. And therefore, if our own Wants and Necessities cannot awake us, let the Goodness of God persuade us to this Duty, who is so ready to hear us. This is the second Reason to enforce the Duty of Prayer. And so I have done with the first thing considered in my Text; the earnest Injunction of a Duty; O pray.

2. The second thing to be taken notice of, is, the thing we are to pray for, and that is *the Peace of Jerusalem*. This Exhortation is directed to those that think Prayer a Duty, and usually pray for themselves; for they that are so stupid, as not to pray for themselves, will never be persuaded to pray for others: and he that neglects his own Advantage, will never be much concern'd for the publick Good. There is nothing in the world more plain, than that the publick Peace and Safety of a Nation redounds to the particular Advantage of every person in it: and therefore,

if men are not so publick-spirited, as to be concern'd for the general Good of the Nation; yet methinks each mans private Interest, and the Laws of Self-preservation, ought to perswade us to pray for the Peace of *Jerusalem*, for the Good of the King and Country: He that is not a Friend to the publick Peace of that Kingdom wherein he lives, can never be a good Subject; and he that is not a good Subject, can neither be a good Christian, nor an honest Man: For the same God that bids us love the Brotherhood, commands us also to honour the King: 'tis natural for every man to wish well to the place of his Nativity, or the place of his Residence; and how he can do that, without desiring the publick Good of such a place, I cannot understand: every mans particular Advantage and Safety is a branch of the publick.

There is no person so inconsiderable, but may contribute to the general Good of a Nation, either by his Endeavours or Prayers; nay, we commonly find, that Insurrections and Civil Wars are often begun, but always carried on by the Common people, (and therefore they may prevent such Disturbances) not but they mean as well, and oft-times better, than those that perswade them to disturb the Peace of a Kingdom; but they are persons usually of mean understandings, and are very often cajol'd and wheedled into Rebellion, by fine Words, and gilded Pretences.

The best way for the ordinary sort of men not to be caught in these snares, is, to believe and consider that Rebellion is a most grievous Sin, 'tis as the sin of Witchcraft; and you know the Law says, *Thou shalt not suffer a Witch to live*. And if Rebellion be such a Sin, 'tis not the pretences of Defending Liberty and Property, of Destroying Popery & Arbitrary Government, that can make it not a Sin: for however advantageous these may be to a Commonwealth, yet still Rebellion is a damning Sin; and we must
not

not do evil, that good may come thereof. Consider in what horrid Confusion we were not many years since, by our Distractions, Fears and Jealousies, when there was no King in *Israel*, no Church, no Law, but every one was setting up a Church and a Government for himself, and every one did what seemed good in his own eyes. Nay, many of those persons that were seduced into Rebellion, when they saw the Injustice and Hypocrisie of their Ringleaders, were asham'd of their proceedings.

Are not these Miseries the greatest that can befall a Nation? And if they be, is not every particular man oblig'd, by the Duty he owes his King, the Love he owes his Country and himself, to pray for *the Peace of Jerusalem*? He that can prevent a Fire in the heart of a City, and will not, because he lives in the Suburbs, may, for his neglect, have his own House burned to Ashes, and he deserves it; and he that will not, to the utmost of his power, either by his Endeavours, or Prayers, prevent a publick Disturbance in the Kingdom where he lives, because he is not a Statesman, does not deserve to enjoy the benefit of publick Peace and Plenty. Though we are not all born to be Statesmen and Privy-Counsellors, yet every man in his station ought to contribute what he can to the Peace of a Nation: he that is not fit to be a Privy-Counsellor, may notwithstanding contribute to the publick Peace of a Kingdom, by being obedient to his Superiors; by speaking well of the Government, if it be good; by submitting, if it be otherwise; by studying to be quiet, and minding his own business: He that is not qualified to sit at the Helm, may by sitting still keep the Boat from tossing. Let Statesmen, whose Business it is, concern themselves with the Government; but let not every private person, though of never so mean Quality and Understanding, trouble his head with the Management of a Kingdom. Must every private

Passenger

Passenger pretend to steer the Ship, that knows not at which end of her the Rudder is? Our Superiors may, and often do, order things for the publick Good, which to our apprehensions may seem otherwise; must therefore those not be done by our Governors, because we cannot apprehend them? though the Sails of a Ship may make her lie on one side, yet without them she can never reach the Haven; if therefore a few timorous Passengers should cry out, We are all lost; would the Master of the Ship be so great a Fool, as to take down the Sails, and not only hinder his Voyage, but endanger his own and their Safeties, and let her be tossed to and fro by the violence of the Waves, and all because they that knew not what belong'd to a Ship advis'd him to it? There are Secrets in all Arts, which are not to be discovered to every person; and so there are *Arcana Imperii*, Secrets in Government, which are not to be disclosed, but to those that sit at the Helm. Some men are made to govern, others to obey, and we are bound by the Laws of God to be subject to our Superiors, not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake.

If we look into Church History, we shall find, that the primitive Christians were so meek and submissive to the Government, though they lived under Heathen Emperors, that they were the very best Subjects those Emperors had. *Tertullian* in his Apology for the Christians tells us, that the Cities, Corporations, Towns, Villages and Castles were filled with Christians; yet would they not rebel, nor disturb the Government, though they were persecuted to death for no other end, but because they were Christians. Shall then some different Opinions in Religion make Christian Subjects rebel against their Princes, and disturb the publick Peace of the Kingdom: when the primitive Christians thought themselves bound to obey, and live peaceably

under

under Heathen Governours *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lords sake*, says St. Peter, who lived not only under a Heathen Emperor, but under Nero, the greatest Persecutor of them all. If every single person would follow this Advice, and imploy his thoughts about his own Concerns, and not meddle with State affairs; we should be much happier than we are; every man might live peaceably under his own Vine, and under his own Fig-tree. How usual is it for men, upon a story in a Gazette, or a News Letter, to descant upon the Government, and censure, if not reproach the Higher Powers; when it may be the story is false, or if true, they are not able to discern so far, as to know whether that which seems to them to be a Grievance, may not upon some other account than they apprehend, be a Benefit to the publick! Trust the Modelling of the Government to your Superiors, whose Business it is to govern; and trust the Events of the Government to God Almighty, who turns the Hearts of Kings as he pleases; and observe your own Duty to your Country, which is to obey: and though you are not always in a condition of giving a helping hand to the Welfare of *Jerusalem*; your King and Country; yet your Prayers for Peace will be always acceptable to God, who is the God of Peace. So much for the second General in my Text.

3. The third thing to be observed, is the Encouragement we have to be well affected to the Church and State, in these words; *they shall prosper that love thee. Jerusalem* in this Psalm is said to be the place of Worship, thither the Tribes go up to testify unto *Israel*, and to call upon the Name of the Lord. From which it is plain, that by *Jerusalem* is meant the Church. *They shall prosper that love thee*; i. e. happy are they that live quietly, and do not disturb the Peace of the Church. And because *Jerusalem*

tem was the Seat of Judgment, it may also signifie the supreme Power of a Nation, and then the meaning of it will be, Happy are they that live peaceably under the Government of their Superiors both in Church and State, whilst all they are miserable, that bear Evil Will at *Sion*. That this is a sufficient Encouragement to be well affected to the Government will appear, if you consider these two things.

1. The great Happiness of Peace.

2. The Miseries of a Rebellion, or a Civil War.

1. For the first, as Health is to the Body, so Peace is to the Mind; it is the Foundation of all Enjoyments: how insignificant are the best Meats to one whose Palate has no Taste, and whose Body is disturbed by a raging Fever! and how insignificant is even Plenty it self in a Commonwealth, that is sick of Rebellion, which is the Fever of a Kingdom, and is commonly occasion'd by too high Feeding! the sick mans Head is full of Whimsies, which make him rave, and speak of things, which neither he, nor any else can understand; he seldom sleeps, or if he does, he is presently awaken'd with scaring Dreams; and his very Bedcloaths, which in time of Health were a Blessing, and preserved his Body, are a Grievance to him. So 'tis in the State, the Body Politick, when disaffected people, which are the jarring Humours, disturb its Peace. They perplex themselves with strange Fancies of imaginary evils, which no man else can understand, nor they themselves: they throw off those Laws that should protect them, and run into greater Miseries, than could have befallen them, had they really suffered those evils they were afraid of. Happy is the man that bears a loyal Heart to his Prince, and is obedient to the Laws, that is orthodox and peaceable in the Church, and endeavours to preserve Unity in the State; he is every mans Friend, and every man is a Friend to him; he honours the Magistrate and Laws, but is afraid of neither, be-

because he is innocent; he has the free use of his Religion, and the enjoyment of his Estate; he eats his Meat with Pleasure and Contentedness; the night is pleasant to him; he does not dream of ill-got Lands that are in his possession; he is not scar'd with the Cries of Widows, or the Groans of Orphans; he is not haunted with the Guilt of innocent Blood; nor is he frighten'd with the Ghost of a murder'd King. This is the condition of the peaceful man; and if a whole Kingdom were made up of men of this temper; how happy should we be? there would be no decay; no leading into captivity, and no complaining in our streets; There could not be a greater Emblem of Heaven, than such a Nation, where the only strife would be, who should be most charitable, and who should be most loyal to their King, and serviceable to their Country. This is the first Reason to shew the Happiness of those that love the Peace of *Jerusalem*, *they shall prosper that love thee*; for they shall have the Blessings of Peace.

2. Secondly, they shall be free from the miseries of Rebellion, or a Civil War. The Miseries of a Rebellion are twofold; First, either such as befall a Kingdom in general; or secondly, such as befall every Rebel in particular.

1. First the publick Calamities of a Rebellion are innumerable, I shall only instance in some of them that are most obvious. When people are disaffected to the Government of Church or State, and thence take an occasion to break out into Civil Wars; the Subject can neither enjoy the Benefit of the Laws, (which are our Protection in Peace,) nor the Use of Religion, nor the Profits of his Estate, without fear and danger: there is no Administration of Justice, there is no difference between Right and Wrong: Strength is the Lawgiver, and the longest Sword the measure of Justice: the Corn-fields are destroyed; the stately Buildings are either void of Inhabitants, or are made a Garrison for

those that are strongest: the Houses of God are profan'd, and demolish'd, and are made a Receptacle for Birds, and Beasts; and the whole Land lies desolate: Grass and Weeds grow in the Streets of our great Cities, the Walls are beaten down, the Houses burnt, and the Inhabitants fled or murdered: the Universities are emptied: the Liberal Arts & Sciences must give place to the violence of the Sword; and so Learning is nipp'd in the very bud: Pride and Robbery, Ambition and Sacrilege, Oppression and Murder, Covetousness and Profaneness, or else Hypocrisy, are the usual attendants of Rebellion. He that is in love with Famine, Plague and Desolation, let him murmur and rebel: for they are the effects of a Civil War. If there were no other Punishment for resisting the supream Power, after this Life; yet the Calamities I have mention'd may be sufficient to terrifie any one from it, that is not altogether void of Sense and Honesty. Rebellion is punishment enough for it self. These are the publick Miseries of Rebellion.

2. Secondly, there are Miseries that befall private persons in Rebellion. The several publick Calamities that I have now reckon'd, though they are not all, yet they are sufficient to shew, that whilst any Kingdom is in that condition, no particular person can be happy. But besides all this, there is another reason to terrifie particular persons from it, and that is the Execution of the Laws when the Rebellion is ended; for it cannot last always: what a Disgrace, as well as Misery, is it for one to be mark'd for a Rebel, to be proclaim'd a Traytor, to lose an Estate, or an Employment for Villany, to be hang'd for Treason, and to have his Head fix'd upon a pole, as a spectacle of Shame and Infamy! he is not only unhappy himself, but he intails Misery and Poverty on his Family, and his Posterity shall blush to hear him nam'd: but suppose Success crown'd his Endeavours, and that Rebellion had got the upper hand; he

he may be great, but he cannot be happy: Fear and Guilt shall never let him enjoy himself, nor what he has unjustly gotten: and besides the Hand of Providence, which is ready to smite and pull him down; there is a natural desire in men to destroy such a Monster, as being as dangerous as a wild Beast: and if no body else will, God himself usually makes such persons fall out among themselves in dividing the Spoil, and so destroy one anothers designs; as it hap-pen'd not long since in these Kingdoms: and to compleat the Rebels Miseries, when his unhappy Life here is ended, he shall be thrown headlong into Hell, to keep company with the first Rebel *Lucifer*. And so I have dispatch'd the third General, *i. e.* the Encouragement we have to pray for the Peace of *Jerusalem*, *they shall prosper that love thee*.

In the last place, I will reduce what I have said to practice. You see the necessity of the Duty of Prayer enjoin'd in my Text, from our Wants and Necessities, and from the Mercy of God, who is ready to hear us. You see the thing we ought to pray for, *i. e.* the Peace of *Jerusalem*, the good of Church and State, a publick Blessing; and the Encouragement to this Duty from the third General, *they shall prosper that love thee*. You see the Happiness of those that live in peace and obedience to the Laws, and the Miseries of Rebellion, both in this life, and that which is to come. Consider the Folly as well as Misery of those that disturb the Peace of a Kingdom, and the Disgrace that attends such resisting the lawful Magistrate. There is no pretence whatsoever, whether of Liberty, Property, &c. that can make Rebellion not to be a damning Sin. There is not any one Duty more plainly commanded throughout the whole Scripture, than Obedience to Magistrates. There is nothing contributes so much to the Peace of *Jerusalem*, to the publick good of a Nation, and the particular good of every person in it. There are many examples in the Old Testament

of Gods Judgments against Rebels ; and the end of our Saviours coming into the world was to plant a Gospel of Peace among men, and if the preaching of Peace was ever a Duty, it is now, by reason of the Divisions among us. The great and general cause of Rebellion is Ambition, though Religion is often pretended : and therefore the best way to prevent a publick Disturbance of the Peace, is, not to be ambitious of any thing that cannot be attain'd to, without an Alteration in the Government. Let us not speak evil of the Ruler of the people, nor murmur at our Superiours, because their Actions do not please our Humours ; and when we find our selves oppressed, let us examine our own Lives, and try whether our own Wickedness is not the Cause of Gods punishing us with such Rulers. *Honour thy Father and Mother*, which is the first Commandment with promise, is not only to be understood of our Natural Parents, but of the Magistrate, who is our Civil Parent, and length of Days is the Promise annex'd to this Commandment. Saint Paul exhorts us, in his first Epistle to *Tymothy*, to make Supplications and Prayer for all men, and in the first place mentions Kings, and all that are in Authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable Life in all Godliness and Honesty. There is more Weight than Honour in Government ; and therefore we ought to be so much concern'd for the publick Good, as never to pray for our selves, but at the same time to pray for the Peace of *Jerusalem*, for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour: beware of aspersing the Government, for there is a particular providence over Kings which will discover thy folly; if by murmuring and complaining of the Supream Power, thou art an Enemy to the Peace of *Jerusalem*. *Curse not the King, no not in thine heart, for a Bird of the Air shall carry the Voice, and that which hath Wings shall tell the matter.* Is there not more wisdom in busying our selves with our own concerns,

in

in submitting to our Superiours and the Laws of the Land, that we may enjoy our Religion, our Estates, and our Liberties (which are all the effects of publick Peace) than to speak evil of Dignities, to promote a Disturbance in *Jerusalem*, which does not only endanger our Happiness, and Estates, but even our Lives, and the Welfare of our Posterity?

There is not any Church in the World, whose Principles are more repugnant to Rebellion, than the Church of *England*: If therefore you would shew your selves to be true Sons of that Church you pretend to, you must be loyal to the King, and submissive to the Government; it is a Principle not only honest, but generous, and agreeable to the meek Spirit of the primitive Christians. They may pretend to Religion; but they who, under that colour, can resist the supream Power, have no more Religion than *Mahometans*. To contrive the Death of a Prince, or the Subversion of a Government, for the sake of some Differences in Religion, is not only unchristian but inhumane. Let this be a general Observation, That they who put on a precise Countenance, and under the colour of Religion speak evil of Dignities, murmur against the Government, and, when opportunity offers, endeavour to disturb its Peace, notwithstanding their pretences to Religion, and the Good of the Nation, cannot be honest men. Though the Wounds of our late Civil Wars are heal'd up, yet there are Scars enough remaining, to frighten any wise man from attempting to disturb the Peace of *Jerusalem* a second time. There are no Subjects under the Heavens, that may live more happily than we, if we, by our Divisions and repinings, do not make our selves otherwise: have not we a gracious Prince, that is so far from oppressing his good Subjects, that he is merciful and even indulgent to the worst? has any Kingdom in the world better Laws than we have, to secure the Prerogative

of the Prince, and the Liberty of the People? and have we not all the benefit of those Laws to protect us? is there any one persecuted with Fire and Faggot for Religion? is there any one that can complain that his Goods or Estate is wrested from him by Oppression or Tyranny? and if we did groan under any such Calamities; yet the Laws of God will not allow a Protestant of the Church of *England* to rebel: though both the Papist and Presbyterian can make the Scripture speak treason when they please. And if it be a damning Sin (as certainly it is) to resist the Higher Powers, even when they persecute and oppress us; it is much more heinous in the sight of God, to reproach or rebel against so merciful a Sovereign as we enjoy.

I pray God remove all our Fears, Jealousies, and Divisions, and make us sensible of the Blessings of Peace, which we enjoy; and may the Kings Enemies be cover'd with shame, but on his Head may the Crowns flourish.

F I N I S.

